

▶ MANY MILLIONS ARE INVOLVED IN THIS LAND SUIT ▶

Ball Heirs Are to Demand Valuable Property in This City.

Ninety-Nine-Year Leases Have Expired and Actions Result.

ACCORDING to the statements made by the representatives of the many heirs descended from relatives of Joseph Ball, the brother of the mother of George Washington, it is probable that one of the greatest land suits ever brought in the United States, if not the world, is soon to be instituted in this city. The property left by the uncle of the "Father of His Country" is today appraised at \$75,000,000, and the heirs believe that as much of it was transferred to other people on ninety-nine year leases it can be recovered.

The property is located in half a dozen States, including Pennsylvania, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and Kentucky. The Washington real estate consists of eleven squares, which are said to have a real value of between \$4,000,000 and \$5,000,000. In all there are said to be about 600 heirs to all of the property. A number of these heirs are residents of the District of Columbia, and they have formed an association to push the claims.

Local Officers.

Mrs. Charles A. Drayton, who lives at 113 Rhode Island Avenue, is the president. Miss Lee Washington, of the Columbia flats, is vice president, and Mrs. Eva Shuster, of 1723 Q Street, is secretary. It is said the test case is to be brought for possession of the famous old Ball homestead, now used as a boarding house, and for years an inn, opposite the Mount Vernon Steamship Wharf in the square between Sixth and Seventh and M Streets southwest.

This building is said to be one of the oldest in Washington, no one being able to tell just when the structure was erected. It has, however, the walls of a fort and windows which were once embrasures for old flintlocks. The walls are three and four feet thick. At one time the house was surrounded by a grove of great trees, and a lawn sloped down to the Potomac, but these naturally disappeared years ago.

This house replaced a fort which stood on the same spot at a time when Washington was a small boy. It was a trading place for the Indians.

The heirs at first had determined to bring suit for possession of the old



THE OLD BALL HOUSE.

Hope farm property at Philadelphia, on which the Cramps have their immense shipbuilding plant. This part of the program was, however, abandoned for legal and sentimental reasons, so the contest could commence here. The title to the old Ball place in M Street, is held by the heirs of the Pepper estate. More than fifty owners have intervened since Ball disposed of it. Nearly all of the Washington heirs are prominent socially, and a majority of them are wealthy. It is said there is no lack of money to prosecute the claims. The case is certain to become as great in legal history as the man who accumulated the land is in the general history of the country.

Washington's mother, Mary Ball, was a famous beauty in her day, and was known as "The Rose of Epping Forest." Vast tracts of land belonged to the family, and of this her brother, Joseph, the man over whose estate the fight is to be made, after nearly a hundred years, was allotted his share.

Acquisitive Joseph.

Joseph, however, seemed to be of an acquisitive nature, and he added to his land until his own property exceeded that of the other members of the Ball family and nearly all this, too, at a time when land was the wealth of the

Washington People Who May Obtain Part of the Vast Ball Estate Are:

R. W. Medrick,	Mrs. Laura Fitzhugh,	Miss Alice V. Lawrence
Charles E. Brayton,	Mrs. N. H. Mahon,	Miss Eva Shuster,
T. W. Tallmadge,	Mrs. Margaret B. Dodge,	Miss Virginia L. Evans,
Robert E. Ball,	Mrs. Mattie Morris,	Miss T. B. Washington,
Frederick Witzell,	Mrs. Elihu Duvall,	Miss Lee Washington,
Vernon G. Owen,	Mrs. H. G. Kingsbury,	Miss Mary E. Douglass,
William E. Ball,	Mrs. Chas. E. Spousler,	Miss Virginia F. Ball,
Blackburn Easterline,	Mrs. D. A. Montgomery,	Miss A. B. Chinn,
Mrs. John K. Souther,	Mrs. Charles E. Ball,	Miss Edith Fitzhugh,
Mrs. John B. Sleman,	Mrs. Mary J. Ball,	Miss D. Ball,
Mrs. J. D. McChesney,	Miss Martha M. Ball,	Miss I. G. Reid,
Mrs. E. W. M. Brown,	Miss T. G. Milligan,	

In addition to the list given here there are a number of others who claim descent from the Balls, many of whom cannot substantiate their claim. In the other States there are several hundred descendants.

country, and when the aristocracy had to have in their possession tens of thousands of broad acres, a condition which ended with the fall of the Confederacy. Dissatisfied with the limitations of the Old Dominion, Ball extended his operations, and not many years elapsed before he had vast tracts in the other States.

Like many other members of Washington's family, Ball died without direct issue, though he married. And he left no will, a fact which makes possible the contest of today. He was living in Philadelphia at the time of his demise, having gone there either on business or pleasure from Virginia. His widow, Sarah Ball, died before the estate was

settled, which complicated matters. Thus the nephews and nieces of the couple became the heirs of the estate, and many of them are shown on the face of the records to have received nothing. Just prior to his death Ball made the ninety-nine year leases, which are now to be the basis of the proceedings.

Law Limits.

The descendants of the nephews and nieces form the heirs of today, and they assert that as the laws limiting the time in which the heirs of intestates can sue were passed after the death of Ball, this sort of an obstacle cannot be interposed to prevent the suits being brought at this time, though nearly a hundred years have passed since the accumulation of the estate passed away. The widow, some of the Pennsylvania records show, received \$125,042.53 as her share of the property of Ball in and about Philadelphia, but what became of it no one knows. It seems, however, that

the matter was taken into court and an administrator named Samuel Richards was appointed.

The records then show that a score of years later this Richards was called into court and he made an accounting showing that he had in his possession most of the sum paid the widow. Apparently no action was taken.

Many more years were allowed to elapse, courts in those days not being what they are today, and nothing further have the heirs been able to find in the records until as late as 1854, when a party of the parents and grandparents of the present heirs took the matter up.

Auditor's Report.

They had an auditor appointed by the orphans' court of Philadelphia, and this officer discovered that the amount had dwindled to less than \$8,000.

None of the money was paid over to the heirs, and this entry in the musty tomes in the ancient orphans' court dis-

Costly Land Claimed in a Number of Other States.

Many Washington People Interested in Outcome of Cases.

poses of the whole vast estate, so far as the heirs have been able to learn. The records of the leases are in the archives of Virginia and Maryland, but there is nothing to show that they were ever disposed of. Expert examiners have been in the employ of the heirs more than a year, delving into the records of all of the States in which the land is situated. They have furnished the facts upon which the suits are to be brought. The list they have prepared of parcels of property is as follows:

Property Here.

In Washington, the squares bounded by Virginia Avenue to Eighth, to B and to Tenth, two squares; the square bounded by Virginia Avenue and Eleventh and Twelfth Streets; that between Eleventh and Twelfth and B and F; that between Eighth and Ninth and B and F; and the three squares bounded by Sixth and Seventh and K and M and Third and Fourth and K and L, all southeast, and the square bounded by Lincoln Park and Eleventh and Twelfth Streets northeast. All of the property is covered with dwellings and other structures, some of them pretentious and others not.

It was Ball's intention, in his later years, so it is said, when his illustrious nephew had laid out Washington, to build what were to be for those days, great warehouses in the southeast, and to have a fine residence near Lincoln Park.

In Other States.

In the States: In Camden county, Ga., 7,000 acres, on which there are several large cotton mills at the present time; in Virginia, 285,000 acres; in Kentucky, 50,000 acres; in South Carolina, 107,000 acres; in Pennsylvania, three brick houses in Philadelphia, 13,000 acres in Green county; 2,110 in Northampton county, 12,190 in Milford county, \$2,100 in Huntington county, 15,000 in Luzerne county, and 6,000 in Pike county.

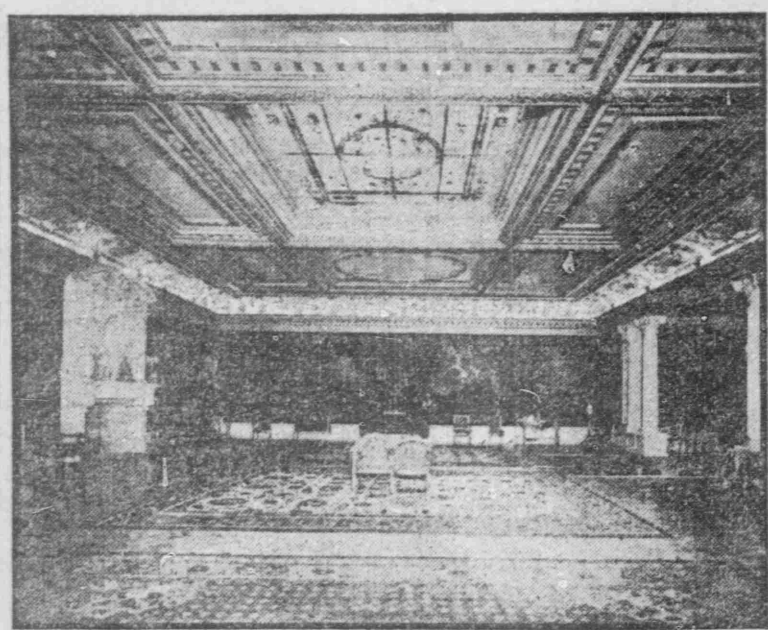
The heirs are confident, and President Braxton asserts that the land will all be back in the possession of the family in a few years.

BEAUTIFUL INTERIOR DECORATIONS OF THE GENERAL DRAPER MANSION

THE Draper Mansion, in K Street, opposite Farragut Square, is one of the really historic homes of the Capital. Built by the late Alexander Shepherd for his private residence, when he was Governor of the District of Columbia, the old house has witnessed many notable gatherings of famous men and women.

Romance later added its quota of interest when the mansion was occupied by Mrs. Washington McLean, and her daughter, Mrs. Mildred Hazen, who afterward became Admiral Dewey's wife. The "hero of Manila" wooed and won Mrs. Hazen there, and it is whispered that the first message from Dewey after the official one to the Navy Department came to his fair fiancée at that house.

After Mrs. McLean died the property was purchased by General Draper, former American ambassador to Italy. Among special innovations of the Drapers should be mentioned the magnificent ballroom and Italian tapestries imported by General Draper from Italy. Certainly, the tapestries cannot be duplicated in Washington, if in America. They are Flemish, of the sixteenth century, and were taken from a ducal pal-

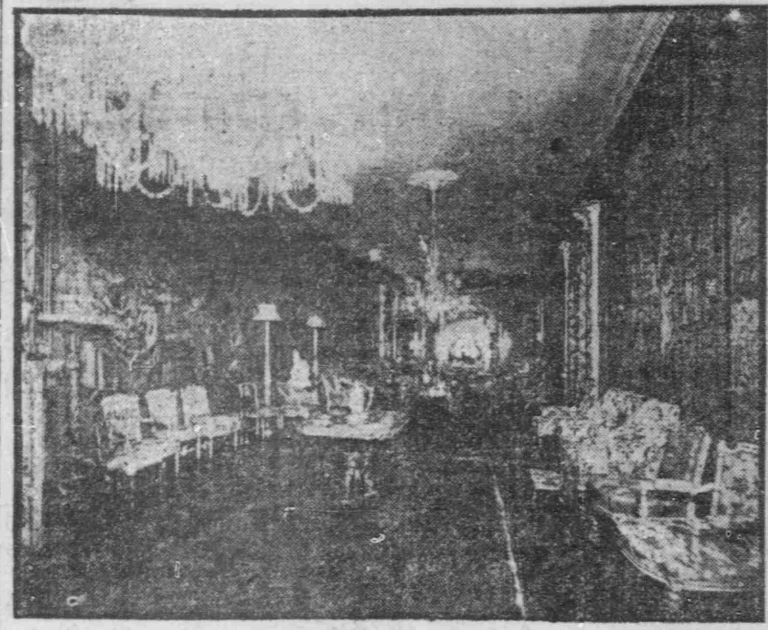


THE DRAPER BALLROOM.

ace in Rome, and are after designs by Raphael.

The scenes on the tapestries are pastoral, and were probably taken from the surrounding country. One of the most interesting pieces shows several dogs chasing a wild boar. Its companion piece depicts the end of the chase, where the frightened, half-maddened animal struggles in the grasp of his pursuers, who show the fiercest delight over their captive. In others, deer stalk over smooth, green lawns, swans are seen on the artificial lake, timid fawn peep cautiously out from the depths of a dark forest, and a lonely eagle seems to have suddenly swooped to the ground, and with wings poised is ready to take its flight again.

The ballroom floor, which is 50x60 feet, is of parquetry, and covered with Turkish rugs. The design of the most notable one is allegorical, and is called the "Tree of Life," representing all the ages of man. The decorations of the room are of the Italian Renaissance period, the tall mantel, with its wide, open fireplace, being an exact reproduction of the one in the Louvre. The furniture is of green and gold, and Mrs. Draper has installed a baby grand piano



THE RECEPTION ROOM.

to be used at the musicales she purposes giving.

The reception room is an interesting apartment on account of its many curios and souvenirs of Mrs. Draper's residence abroad, and also because of the valuable works of art it contains. In this room are three exquisite pieces of tapestry purchased of Prince Borghese, of Rome. They are Gobelins of the thirteenth century, and represent scenes from Roman history, "Caesar in Egypt," "The Wedding of Charlemagne," and "The Triumph of Constantine."

In this room are busts of General and Mrs. Draper made in 1899 by Waldo Story, and a copy of the Canova bust of Princess Borghese (Pauline Bonaparte), who is said to have posed for his "Venus."

Photographs of the late King of Italy and Queen Margherita, with the latter's autograph, and those of the present King and Queen occupy the prominent places on the walls. Rubens' famous painting of his wife is in this room, as well as Havelstein's "Tiber at Ostia." In this room, too, are two sets of interesting miniatures, Napoleon with his two favorite generals, New and Murat, and Josephine with Mme. Tallien and the Duchesse d'Angoulême. A round breast table inlaid with miniatures of Louis XVI and the ladies of his court is one of the chief ornaments of the room, and a quaint ebony cabinet found in Saxony's capital.

Washington Catholics Receive From Rome Authentic Letters Concerning the Finding of Treasures in the Vatican

LETTERS have been received in Washington which for the first time give the facts concerning the alleged finding of vast sums of money in the Vatican after the death of Pope Leo. These letters are from prominent churchmen of Rome to churchmen here, and explain away the alleged mystery.

According to the stories as told up to the present time, the sums have been given anywhere from one hundred thousand to ten million dollars. On one occasion Cardinal Gotti was represented as appearing at the Vatican with many strong boxes filled with gold and jewels, and turning them over to Pius X, after announcing that they had been confided to his care by the late Pontiff, with the injunction that they remain with him until forty days after a new Pope had been fixed upon.

In his instructions to Gotti, Pope Leo was represented as having said: "We verily believe, Gotti, that you will be our successor. If this is so, you will understand the use to which this treasure is to be put; otherwise you will turn it over to whosoever is chosen."

Denied by Pope.

These reports all met with denial at the Vatican, the new Pope, Pius X, having stated in reply to one inquiry: "I only wish they were so. We would then be so much the richer."

Doubtless the tales originated from a fact not until now known—that Pope Leo, by great self-sacrifice and wonderful foresight, was enabled to leave for his successor an enormous fund realized, not from Vatican revenues, but from his own personal income and the large number of gifts bestowed upon him by a grateful and admiring world.

This fund is not available for ordinary needs, but is to be held as "a cash reserve for the extraordinary circumstances, in which some crisis might impose on the Holy See great trials and sacrifices." Its existence, moreover, was not a secret to the officials of the Vatican. The new Pope, Pius X, himself knew of it.

Mysterious Aid.

Frequently it happened that some noble and deserving family, impoverished through no fault of its own, was restored to comfort, or some hospital received aid through a mysterious source known only to itself. The benefactor in many instances was none other than Pope Leo. But so kindly, so unassuming was he that his left hand seldom knew the good wrought by the right.

In order to follow to successful conclusions charities of this sort, Leo was obliged to have considerable ready money at hand. These were the sums found in various places.

The idea of making ready a fund available against some unforeseen crisis in history seized upon the late Pope shortly after he ascended to the throne. He was not acting without historic precedent. Years before the Christian era the Pharaohs of Egypt did the same thing. Every Rameses, every Thothmes, every Amenophis, every ruler of the truly Egyptian dynasties before the Greek Ptolemies sat on the throne, laid up treasure against the time when his land, beset by enemies at home or abroad, would require extraordinary financial strength.

An Official Statement.

Tomb after tomb, pyramid after pyramid, secret hoarding place after secret hoarding place have been uncovered full of it—gold, silver, precious stones, fabrics of price and articles of art capable of fetching at any time their equivalent in money in the open market. The policy was a great and farsighted one, but Leo, with the final decay and fall of Egypt's greatness, and the loss of the great treasures its Kings had gathered secretly, before him, improved upon it. He did not put his wealth away in secret places known only to himself. All the higher officials of the Vatican were well aware that the formation of a great fund was in progress and where it could be found if occasion demanded.

At first he modeled his financial sys-

tem after that of Sixtus V, the "shop-herd boy" Pope, whose fiscal management of the Holy See was one of the wonders of the seventeenth century. As time passed he found this system to be inadequate, and he added to its breadth. Sixtus V believed that money gives power. That aphorism of government suited well the rare canonist and marvelous administrator that Leo XIII was. For that reason he did not wish his new fund to sap the revenues of the Vatican, already not over large. So he determined upon self-sacrifice and turned aside all of the gifts which fell to him. They came in gold and silver ornaments, objects of art, sacerdotal vessels, pictures, vestments, richly-bound books, priceless illuminated missals and devotional volumes, gemmed rings, crucifixes, reliquaries; everything that loyal churchmen's fancy could devise and money purchase flooded in upon him.

In addition were added the Pope's wonderful collections of jewels and lace. Probably no living man, and few nations, could boast of such gems as Leo possessed.

Jewels and Laces.

Many crowns piled beside his store of precious stones. As to laces, no noblewoman of Europe or Great Britain could boast of such a store. The late Pope was a connoisseur in fabrics of this kind, and his collection was unique for its beauty and art as well as value. But

this, too, was only a part of the great system of treasure he continued to amass for the church up to the day he was seized by his last illness.

The aggregate value of the Pontifical emergency fund is not known outside of the Vatican, and the officials within are not inclined to discuss the matter.

It must, however, be very great. The gifts received by the Pope on the occasion of his jubilee alone are said to have cost millions of dollars, yet they, too, were set aside for the great purpose always in view.

It is not to be imagined that the Italian government was in ignorance of the Pontifical treasure. When the various small sums were found in Leo's apartments the Quirinal newspapers made a great to-do about them. The object was to strike a blow at the fund known as Peter's Pence by confusing the faithful into believing that the Vatican was so wealthy it really did not stand in need of that contribution.

Debt of the See.

This is far from being the truth. The debt and credit of the Holy See do not balance at present. The actual budget was up to 7,000,000 lire, while the receipts do not exceed 5,000,000 lire; two millions from funded property and three millions from contributions, and the latter have shown a remarkable tendency to decrease.

The new Pope, therefore, may and

himself obliged to adopt new methods. One method he is said to be considering is the annual publication of the list of gifts and the donors' names. This he believes would increase the enthusiasm over contributions to Peter's Pence.

As soon as the precise conditions are

❖ He Recorded the Murder in a Diary ❖

THAT it is another of those stories from real life that would be dismissed as incredible if used in a novelist's plot is all one can say of the tale that has just come from England of a tramp who killed a woman, recorded the fact in his diary, and has just fallen into the hands of justice through the gruesome entry being discovered.

The murder with which this tramp now stands charged was committed in the hop fields near Kidderminster, nearly three months ago, under particularly revolting circumstances. Mary Evelyn Burns, the victim, was sixty-three years old. One Saturday afternoon she was seen with a stranger. The next morning a cow keeper found her body by the roadside. The murderer had slashed the body until it was almost unrecognizable, and then departed, leaving his large, heavy knife by her side.

The affair made a great sensation, but not the faintest clue to the slayer could be uncovered. What mystified the authorities was that anything else was the apparent lack of motive, for so far

as they could discover the woman was on unfriendly terms with no one and her financial position would not attract even the meanest robber.

A few days ago the jail at Lincoln, some distance from Kidderminster, admitted a tramp sentenced by the district magistrate to ten days' detention for vagrancy. While the warder was preparing the bath every prisoner must take on entering the prison, he noticed the tramp take from his pocket a small notebook, tear a leaf out of it, roll the paper into a ball and put it into his mouth. The officer pretended to take no notice of the prisoner's action, and the tramp, at a moment when he thought the warder's attention diverted, ejected the partly chewed fragments into a dark corner of the room.

When the prisoner had been removed to a cell, the warder gathered up and pieced together the tiny bits, and read: "I murdered her. God help me. Murder will out." On the same page were other references to the Kidderminster crime which convinced the authorities that the murderer they were so anxious to meet had fallen into their hands.